## GUIDE TO THE AE4 LOLO FILE

[The Lolo are the largest group of non-Han Chinese in southwest China, occupying southwestern Szechwan, most of the mountainous areas of Yunnan, western Kweichow and extending into northern Indochina. The official Chinese Communist estimate of their population is 3.26 million (Area Handbook for the People's Republic of China, 1972, p. 106). There are probably another 10,000-15,000 in Indochina. Their homeland and center of densest concentration is in the Taliang Shan (Cold Mountains) in southwestern Szechwan, approximately 26-28 degrees North latitude and 102-104 degrees East longitude.

Lolo is not a term used by the people themselves, and like a number of other referential terms used by the Chinese, it carries an abusive connotation. Other Chinese names for them are Lo-kuei, Man-chia, Man-tzu (the last two meaning southwestern barbarian, and all three being insulting), I, I-chia, and Yi (which are the official Chinese Communist terms for them, carrying no abusive connotation). They may refer to themselves as Leisu, Mosu, Neisu, Nesu, Ngosu, No, Norsu, and Nosu (the last two terms are used mainly by the Lolo of Taliang Shan and neighboring Kweichow). Other commonly found names are Hei-I or Hei Ku T'ou, and Pei-I or Pei Ku T'ou, which refer to the upper and lower classes, respectively, of the Lolo. The Lolo speakers of Indochina go by a great variety of names that may be found in LeBar et al., Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia, 1964, pp. 26-27. Lolo is used here only because it is used widely in the ethnographic and linguistic literature, but it is not a proper term of address or reference.

Linguistically and racially, the Lolo are classed as Tibeto-Burman. Their dark brown skin and Caucasoid features (Iranian or Indo-Afghan) suggest a western origin. This also probably accounts for the name of the upper class, Black bone or Black Lolo, as opposed to White bone for the lower class, which is partially composed of Han Chinese. They have been in Szechwan and Yunnan for at least 2,000 years, since the beginning of recorded history in the area. They are the people who were displaced by invading Han agriculturalists, although they themselves may have absorbed earlier indigenous inhabitants. Most Lolo, outside of the heartland, but the White Lolo or serfs, more so than the Black, are highly acculturated to the Han Chinese. In both Yunnan and Kweichow, they generally speak Chinese as well as Lolo. The Lolo language is Tibeto-Burman and is related to Lahu, Akha and Lisu. There is a pictographic script found in the sacred books, but it is readable only by trained priests. It is unknown in many of the more remote Lolo regions, such as Indochina.

The subsistence economy is a mixture of agriculture (maize, the main crop, wheat, beans, buckwheat on swidden fields, potatoes, oats, some vegetables, and occasionally rice when irrigation is possible) and animal husbandry (sheep and goats, horses, and Yak in northern areas). The Black bone Lolo are above agricultural work which is performed by White bone serfs and slaves. The aristocrats however, tend the animals. Hunting is a high status activity in the northern regions but is of secondary economic importance. The Indochinese Lolo keep few animals and practice wet rice agriculture more widely, though maize is still a major crop. They also raise tobacco and opium.

The Nosu of Taliang Shan are the most independent of the Lolo and maintain the most rigid isolation from the Han, as well as the most rigid social structure. The Black bone Nosu comprise only 10% of the population, but they are the landowners and act as feudal lords over the serfs (70%) and the slaves (20%). Slaves may become serfs, but the Black bone are strictly endogamous and there is no possibility of movement into the upper class.

The nuclear family is the basic social and land owning unit. Although the named exogamous patriclans own the land, the nuclear families that use it have complete rights to the farm land and may pass it on to their children, but may not alienate it from the clan. Clans live together in a single village or a number of adjacent villages. Post-marital residence, after the birth of the first child, is patrilocal. Marriage is regulated by both class (endogamy) and clan (exogamy). Clan leadership is based on personal ability rather than systematic succession. Occasionally a regional prince (hzemo) will arise, but he will have no authority over internal clan matters. In general there is no political organization above the clan. Until recently, interclan feuding was almost constant. Horsemanship and military prowess were the most valued traits of a Black bone leader.

The Lolo religion is a complex form of animism with a great variety of good and evil spirits affecting the outcome of every event. The principal religious practitioner is a male priest-sorcerer (Pimu) who can control magic, exorcise evil spirits and bring rain. This position is hereditary and the skills, including reading the sacred texts, are passed from father to son or mother's brother to sister's son. There is also a curer (Simu), who gets his power from having been ill himself. Pimu act as diviners and are consulted before undertaking any important event. The priests as

well as the artisans come from the White bone class. Among the Sinicized Lolo of Yunnan, Buddhist and Taoist temples are found in most villages, and the old religion based on the now rare sacred texts is being replaced. The Indochinese Lolo possess only a rudimentary form of the traditional religion.

The Black Lolo, especially those of Taliang Shan, have been extremely resistant to Chinese influence and some have to this day remained independent of Chinese political control. The Liangshan has been an Autonomous Chou (a chou is comparable to a U. S. state) since 1951, but the Chinese have continued to try and take advantage of the dissatisfactions of the White Lolo serfs and slaves.

There are five sources in the AE4 Lolo file, numbered 1, and 3-6. One is in English and five are translations from the Chinese. 1: Lin is the best introduction to the file. It is a general ethnography by a Chinese anthropologist, covering class, economic, and political organization, marriage and kinship, religion and magic, and much on clan feuds, slave raids and warfare. 3: Ma concerns exorcism among the Black Lolo. 4: Lei is about religion, ancestor worship and magical-medical practices. 5: Pollard is by a missionary and is the earliest source in the file, the fieldwork dating from the 1890's. It is a lengthy general account of Nosu life based on his personal observations and emphasizing material culture, ethnic subgroups and social structure. 6: Tseng Chao-lun is a short general ethnography containing data on history, material culture and social organization.

All of the authors except Pollard are ethnologists and their fieldwork was carried out between 1939 and 1943. The

file provides a good general description of the Lolo, without a great amount of detail on any one area. It should prove useful for comparisons with other ethnic groups surrounded by alien national cultures, especially other non-Han groups in China. The file was processed between 1956 and 1960.]